



The Sweet Science

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For the past 16 years, Tony Valdez, a teamster at the Laboratory, has also been pursuing his love of boxing, earning a professional boxing record of eight wins, four losses and seven draws.

In a 2016 article in *Boxing News*, journalist Austin Killeen described Tony's approach to boxing as follows: "Fighting Valdez is like having a rash, he never seems to go away."

Like so many who are attracted to the sweet science, Tony Valdez seemed destined to become a fighter.

"I remember as far back as when I was 14 years old I was always fighting—I loved getting into fights," Tony says, a little smile on his chiseled face. "There's this good friend of mine, his name is Dennis O'Brian, he found a boxing coach in Santa Fe by the name of Mario Montoya. Dennis tells me, here's this guy's number—you always wanted to box—so call him and make the connection. The rest is up to you."

Tony remembers those early years training under Montoya and later under renowned Santa Fe boxing trainer and promoter Pat Holmes as some of the best. "I felt like the king of the world because I was doing what I loved," he recalls.

Through his 16-year professional career, Tony has come face-to-face with some of the world's best boxers, such as Felipe Rivas, Gilberto Mendosa, Raymond "Hollywood" Montes and Augustine Banegas. "That's how I earned my nickname," Tony says. "They call me 'The Warrior' because I always turned down the easy cards—I only wanted to fight the toughest guys out there."

Moving on but keeping a hand in boxing

Today, Tony is inactive on the professional circuit and is contemplating retirement. However, there has always been an urge to pass on what he learned the hard way to the next generation of boxers, both male and female.

On Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, Tony spends his time at his gym, where he teaches boxing to young people of all ages.

Tony makes sure to work with each of his students, focusing on their specific desires. One moment he is teaching someone the basics of calisthenics while the next he is in the ring with another student practicing punching precision and targeting by using contact mitts.

"I'm still living the dream," says Tony. "This is my gym, where I get to train with kids and still keep fresh in boxing."

Learn more about Tony in his [full Employee Spotlight](#).

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